Auditor's Office

The Somerset Press.

VOLUME 3. SOMERSET, OHIO: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1876. NUMBER 45.

SELECT STORY.

ETHEL'S METHOD.

The tidy servant-maid entered the parlor with mop-pail and dust-cloth.—She looked at the drenched plants in the window-garden—her young mistress still holding the streaming watering-pot over them, with a grave, absent look on her face, quite unusual; at the little pools of water all over the oilcloth that protected the carpet; and her neatness took alarm.

"La, ma'am! just look how you are wetting 'em—runnin' all over everything!"

The lady started, looked down at the dripping plants, and, coloring faintly, said:

"Yes, I have watered them most too much. Never mind. Just wipe up the water, Mary, and it won't do any harm. They were so very dry."

This last was said by way of explaining to the girl what might otherwise seem strange; but, truth to say, the plants had never missed being watered a day yet.

"Sure, ma'am, they won't be dry again for a long time to come."

A scrap of paper, picked up from a habit of oversight and order, and carelessly glanced at, was the real cause of this absence of mind. It had not been pleasant reading for a bride of a few weeks, especially when the words were in one's husband's handwriting:

"I can't stand this. I'm off to the club again; I love Ethel well enough, of course; but, if she were only a little more like Helen, or not quite so——well, quite so spooney and sentimental."

This Ethel "who was loved well enough, of course," but who was "spooney and sentimental," was herself; but who was "Helen"—this fortunate person whom it was desirable she should resemble?

People take trouble differently—a good deal according to the temperament, and a good deal according to the amount of good sense.

Unfortunately for her birds, and plants, Ethel Lathrop kept on with her employment while pondering this new aspect of things; unfortunately for the bird, because it got *only* bird-seed—no petting, no nice bit of cake or apple; and for the poor, drowned plants, as we have seen.

As to outward signs, Ethel's blithe song died on her lips. Her dark eyes had opened wider, and, it must be owned, grew blacker and brighter. Her face at first lost all its color; then face, neck, ears flushed to deepest crimson.

"Spooney and sentimental!" Yes, no doubt she *had* been sentimental and fond—if that was what "spooney" meant.—She had shown the man she loved best of all the world, and whom she had supposed till now loved her, all the wealth of her fond young heart; and it had wearied and disgusted him.

At this conclusion, pain, and wounded pride, and mortification brought a deeper tide of crimson to her brow, and the hot tears to her eyes, which as yet pride had kept back. It seemed for a time a question, almost a chance, whether she would cry her heart out, and sink down into a sad, spiritless, prematurely-old woman. She might, perhaps, but for that word "Helen;" but it is doubtful, notwithsanding all the seeming, if there was any possibility of such a result—for Ethel, although deeply wounded in both love and pride, had a deal of character, and spirit, and good sense under the fair, child-like exterior.

She remembered now all the reports of Harry Lathrop's attentions and devotion to a Miss Wilder during two years he was in Europe on business for the firm of which he was junior partner. Could it be her old friend and class-mate, Helen Wilder?

With the confidence of true affection in the man to whom she had been engaged a year, she had only smiled a happy little smile when the gossip was reported to her, and had never questioned him, either in her letters or on his return, as to the foundation of these reports; and their marriage had taken place soon after.

This, then, was the cause of his absence the last four evenings.

"Important business," he had said. She was a stranger in a strange city. He had taken her nowhere. She had returned all her calls alone. He had sent the carriage, but made some excuse for not accompanying her each time. Was she so repulsive to him as that—or was he ashamed of her?

Ethel's haughty little head took a haughtier air at the thought. She was by nature a proud woman, but love had made her meek. *Too* meek, since this was its reward.

What should she do? To say that she thought of packing up her trunks and starting for home, leaving a note for Harry explaining in a few brief words the cause—which she had read a dozen times in novels was the right and proper thing to do—to say that this idea never crossed her mind would be untrue; but Ethel had been brought up in strict New England principles regarding the marriage-sacrament; and, even had she been disposed to forget them, she knew very well that, under such circumstances, the home of her stern Puritan father and mother would not be open to receive her.

That she came to some conclusion was evident from the murmur. "He must win me over again, and find it harder than before;" and the resolute expression round the sweet lips showed that she was no broken-hearted woman.

When Harry Lathrop ran up the steps and opened the door with a latch-key he quite expected as a matter of course, to see a girlish form rush out from behind the door, "just for a surprise," and to feel two arms around his neck. No doubt it was a relief that he did not see anyone, and only heard strains of gay music from the parlor. So absorbed was the musician that she started at the "Good evening, my dear," that sounded just behind her. She did not throw back her head and put up her lips for a kiss, as she had led him to expect she would; but she looked round and smiled brightly, told him she was glad he had come home, and ran off like a good little housekeeper, as she was, to order on the table their dainty supper.

She chatted gayly, as she always did during the meal; but there was a nameless something that attracted her husband's gaze to her every now and then; or it might have been because she was dressed very becomingly and looked unusually pretty—but he had never taken much note of that in Ethel.

After tea Ethel expressed the wish that he would call with her that evening on her friends, Judge and Mrs. Renfield and their daughters, the latter of whom had been her playmates for years.

She saw that he was about to make some excuse and hastened to add:

"They are anxious to know you, Harry, and made me promise to come over with you some evening soon; and it is three weeks since they were here. I fear they will think it strange."

There was not the slightest sign of sullenness or ill-temper when he pleaded some pressing engagement for not going, "he would go some other time, though perhaps it would be better not to wait for him." He read the paper a little while, then put on his overcoat, and with a "Good-by, Puss," went out.

He returned home earlier than usual; for again and again Ethel's face rose before him. He felt uneasy, yet he could not have told why. He wished he had gone with her, she had looked so pretty half-pleading with him to go; and, when he had refused, how good-tempered and sweet she had been. Perhaps it would be better for them both if Ethel were not always so pleasant—something a little more spirited and tantalizing, so that a fellow wouldn't always know what he was to receive—a smile or a frown—it wouldn't be quite so insipid.

So thinking he entered the house.—There was a sense of quietness, of loneliness even, as he opened the door. He hurried into the parlor before taking off his overcoat. The lights were turned down, the room looked deserted. In real alarm he sought the servant. He looked really disturbed as he questioned her.

Mrs. Lathrop went out, sir, with Joseph, soon after you went away. She said she should be home by nine o'clock. It's real lonely-like, you see, for a young thing like her to be alone so, evening after evening. I'm sure she'll come soon, sir," she said, not noticing her master's frowning face.

Feeling indignant and exceedingly injured, Mr. Lathrop wandered aimlessly, about the parlors until he heard the sound of carriage-wheels, and Ethel's merry voice bidding some one "good night;" and the bell rang, when he threw himself into an easy chair, and was apparently so absorbed with his paper as not to notice her when she entered the room.

"Why, Harry, dear, have you got home first? I did not expect you for half an hour, but I could *not* get away before. They were all so sorry you couldn't come. I have had a delightful time!" And so the dear girl had; expression, voice, manner, all testified to it; and she looked as she felt, bright and happy for the moment.

"And who, pray, may 'they' be, if I may presume to ask?" with severe dignity.

"Who? Why, who could they be, Harry, dear, but Judge and Mrs. Renfield and their family?" in a surprised tone.

"And you have been that long distance alone to-night! It wasn't safe, and was out of place. What must they think?"

"But I did not go alone, Harry. I took Joseph with me, and they sent me home in a carriage."

"That proves that they thought strange of it, and that it was not a proper thing for a lady to do. Of course Joseph was no protection."

Ethel answered with spirit:

"I had no one else to go with me, and I am quite sure my friends did not think so strange of my coming to-night as that I had not been there before. And I had a very delightful visit."

"Very well, if that is the way you take my well-meant advice."

This little episode was productive of only a passing cloud. Ethel was naturally sweet-tempered, and Harry liked her none the less for this display of spirit while he thought of it, but in reality forgot all about it before he came home the next night, so that it did not have the effect it should have done—that of making him more thoughtful of, and attentive to, his young stranger-wife.

But, as night after night passed, and he received no more surprises and no more kisses, they could not have been so disagreeable as he had tried to make himself believe, or he would not have leaned over her chair one night after he had got home, and asked:

"Why don't a fellow get any kisses now, Ethel?"

Ethel blushed, but replied, laughingly and in mock surprise:

"What! Kisses after the honeymoon! What a strange idea!"

"So they were only given as a matter of form?" he said, in a piqued tone; "and a poor, credulous fellow took them as proofs of affection. Never mind; give us some supper, then."

He said it almost as if he cared, and Ethel longed to put her love all into one kiss and give it to him; but she was not deceived—it was only a passing caprice, dictated perhaps by vanity.

Ethel was passionately fond of music, and her opportunities for hearing it had been limited. She had hoped, night after night, that Harry would propose going to the opera; but the last day was come, and he had said nothing about it.

Mrs Renfield and her daughters called during the forenoon, and, on learning that she had not been to the opera, and was not expecting to go, insisted that she should accompany them that evening. They would not hear of denial. The Judge was not going, so that there was a spare ticket, and a spare seat in the carriage, and it was just what they wanted. They would call for her and set her down.

Mrs. Renfield had known Ethel from a child, and was as fond of her almost as her own daughters, by whom indeed Ethel was regarded quite as a sister. The experienced matron may have guessed the young wife's trial; but, if she did, she was a safe friend.

At the appointed time Ethel went with her friends, and her evening would have been one of supreme enjoyment had she not, directly after they had taken their seats, discovered her husband not far distant. She felt indignant and resentful, as she had never been before.

To do Harry justice, he had no intention of going to the opera when he left home in the morning; but an acquaintance had urged him to go, and he had consented.

His friend, after looking leisurely about through his glass, remarked:

"The whole world is certainly here. There are the Renfields—not very long here, but quite distinguished and exclusive people. Do you know them? Well worth knowing. I will introduce you. I see a charming new face with them.—Let's make our way there."

Harry looked in the direction his friend indicated. Surely somebody looked familiar. Ethel! At the same time the thought of what people would say rushed over him. What untoward circumstances brought them both here? Any thoughts of Ethel's indignation never troubled him for an instant. He must put the best face on the matter he could to save remark. No one besides the Renfields and their party need know but that this was the arrangement.

When he was presented to Mrs. Renfield her smiling face became severe, and her manner frigidity itself, while she barely acknowledged his salutation; and, when he turned to Ethel as a safe place to hide a momentary embarrassment she met him with the air of a young Empress. But he was too much a man of the world, had too much nonchalance, to be easily disconcerted. The Miss Renfields were more approachable, and were delighted with his manners and conversation. Harry Lathrop rarely failed to please when he wished. Mrs. Renfield herself softened, under the irresistible charm of his manner. Besides, Harry Lathrop was a handsome as well as elegant man. Ethel only remained ice.

"Why didn't you tell a man you were going to introduce him to your own wife? She's wonderfully beautiful; but I pity you, old fellow. She don't care a peg for you. Not a peg!"

However Mr. Lathrop may have regarded his wife, it was not agreeable to have her love for him questioned, and he began to wonder if what he had supposed a superabundance of affection, the expression of which had wearied him, was a mere form, a girlish pretense on Ethel's part, as she had intimated; and, as one is apt to value that of which one is uncertain, he began to feel a vague unrest, and to watch for some proof of Ethel's real feelings.

But Ethel was no longer the easy, sweet-tempered girl, caroling about the house, whom it seemed easy to read, and whom it was of no great consequence whether he offended or not; but a cold, stately woman. He had attempted an explanation, a lame apology, after the evening at the opera; but it was received in silence.

In the meantime Ethel, through the Renfields, had formed quite a large circle of acquaintances, and was everywhere popular. The house was not the deserted place that it had been the first few weeks of her living in it; but young people went and came and often Ethel went out with them.

Occasionally Harry met her on the street with her friends, and had an opportunity to see her with other people's eyes, and began to admire her.

Ethel was very pretty, if not strictly beautiful, and always dressed richly and with exceeding taste. Their circumstances warranted it, and it was her right and duty.

She was, as ever, a careful housekeeper, and studied her husband's tastes and pleasures as far as their domestic arrangements were concerned; but her own life and happiness were becoming independent of him, and some way this idea began to trouble him.

"Shall you go to the Parkers' to-night?" Ethel asked at breakfast.

Mr. Lathrop hesitated, and looked at her to get some sign of her wishes; but the fair face was inscrutable.

"I would rather have a quiet evening here at home with you," he at last replied.

"Thank you; but I have sent an acceptance. Thinking perhaps you would not wish to go I agreed, conditionally, to go with the Renfields. It is the first large party to which I have been invited, and naturally I wished to go."

Harry knew, and perhaps Ethel, that Helen Wilder, now Mrs. Richardson, with her husband, would be there.—Perhaps he feared to rouse the old feelings.

However that may be, at the proper time he accompanied Ethel. If he had feared she would be a heavy weight all the evening he was agreeably disappointed; for they had no sooner been received by Mrs. Parker than a group of young people surrounded Ethel and carried her off, and he would not have got an opportunity to speak with her again during the evening had he not sought it.

He wondered himself at the total indifference with which he met Mrs. Richardson. Not a more rapid heart-beat or quickening of a pulse; but, beautiful as he saw she was, he yet listened with thoughts and eyes wandering toward the "spooney" wife. She passed just then and he met her eyes. There was a strange expression in them—something that he could not fathom; but, with innate perversity, he leaned over the beautiful woman with whom he was conversing with an appearance of great devotion.

Time went on. Ethel Lathrop, from being an object of indifference, "spooney and sentimental," came to be the one person in existence whose affection was of value to her husband, He hated and loathed himself for his treatment of her previously. Common courtesy should have prevented such conduct, and especially when she was a stranger to everyone. "Insufferable puppy" he called himself.

Proud, also, although he was now properly attentive, he would not, though he longed to, become Ethel's shadow.

It was a few weeks before Christmas. Ethel received a letter from home, with an urgent invitation to both her and Mr. Lathrop to come home Christmas and make as long a visit as possible.

Ethel read the letter and passed it to Mr. Lathrop.

"Would you like to go?" he asked, after reading it.

"*Very* much, if possible."

There was no doubt of her wish to go, if tone and look could be trusted.

"Then go, most certainly."

He would have said "We will go;" but he wanted her to express some wish in the matter. She, however, kept a resolute silence. It had been a hard struggle for Ethel to keep up the show of pride and indifference—harder still his feelings toward her, and met many a look that made her almost believe that he loved her. But she must not lose the prize now, if almost won. Neither was it for her to speak.

She made her preparations for going, without further words at the time.—Harry signified neither assent to nor declination of the invitation.

"Mr. Lathrop is going, too, I suppose?" said Mrs. Renfield to Ethel, in his hearing.

He looked eagerly at Ethel. She caught the look, colored and then answered:

"I do not think he has quite decided."

"It is a long journey to take alone, dear. Of course, if he does not go, her will find some one who will accompany you."

Ethel answered something about being a good traveler.

If only she had said she "hoped he would go;" for she knew that Harry only waited a word from her, and Harry knew that she knew it. But she was to go alone. She completed her preparations with a heavy heart; and now ticket, sleeping-berth, lunch, baggage were all ready.

In the sleeping-car Harry bade his wife "good-by" and told her to take care of herself, and write as often as she could. He lingered yet, hoping for the wish "that he was going;" but reluctantly, at last, left her.

But just as he stepped off the car he remembered the magazines in his pocket that he had not given her, and went back. He found her crying—not a tear or two, but a good, genuine cry.

She looked up when he sat down by her, turned her head quickly to the window, and said, hurriedly. "She had a terrible headache."

Those tears some way had made Harry's heart beat quickly, but he only said:

"I came back to give you these magazines. Ethel, if you feel timid about taking this journey alone, just say so. It is a long and tiresome one. I can go just as well as not. Would you rather I, or somebody, went with you? I believe the cars are starting now."

"Yes," murmured Ethel, grateful that he had put such a construction on her crying.

"But it is too late to find anybody else. I fear it will have to be me, Ethel."

"Yes," again said Ethel, not very relevantly.

"Then I shall go."

When the cars were in full motion, and there was no possibility of his going back, Ethel said:

"But how can you manage to go? There's the house! And you haven't any ticket, or baggage, or anything.—What will you do?"

"Oh! I shall manage well enough.—There's the telegraph and plenty of clothing-houses all about," said Harry, with a wicked look in his eyes, and as innocently as if he hadn't his ticket safe inside his coat-pocket, and his valise safely stowed away among the baggage. "I can't let my wife go alone if she wants me. Does she?" he ended with a whisper.

Without answering his question directly, she said:

"It seemed so far to go from home all at once, Harry, after you were gone."

Ethel did not think what she revealed by these simple words; but the brought a great light to Harry's eyes, and a great joy to his heart; and, as she met his eyes at the close of her sentence, I think all was fully understood between them.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Puzzled Clothiers.

Three clothiers of Davenport, Iowa, says the St. Louis Republican, had three similiar surprises for Christmas. They each received, without the knowledge of the others, a letter postmarked "Chicago," containing severally $2, $2 and $7, a lock of shining brown hair tied with a red ribbon, and no writing except the direction on the envelop. Each wondered long in silence over the pretty mystery. Then it happened that one spoke to another about the strange incident, and so all three got into confidential communication, and mingled their wonderments and surmises. The three letters laid side by side showed the same handwriting on their backs. The three little shining sheaves of brown hair were of the same shade, and the three pretty bows of red ribbon were cut off the same piece. The three epistolary mysteries were evidently from the same person—and that person a female, without doubt. Then one of the puzzled clothiers happened to remember that he once had a pretty servant girl with brown hair. Then it was remembered among them that this servant girl had passed from one of the three clothiers to another successively, and had lived in all their families and given satisfaction. She left the last place to marry a man of means and went to Chicago, where one of the clothiers heard she was moving in good society and living an upright life. Then the three clothiers solved their puzzle thus: The girl had been guilty of little peculations while she had lived with them, and thus prettily confessed her fault and made restitution. It could be nothing else than conscience money, and the brown locks were peace offerings for forgiveness and sweet remembrance. They may turn kitchens into charity boarding-houses, feed their beaus on the fat of the larder, hold high carnival generally below stairs, and require employers to furnish them recommendations, but there is something good in the composition of servant girls after all.

A Leap Year Tragedy.

They stood together in the entry beneath the hall lamp. "Then, Henry, she said, in a low voice, wherein were blended determination, melancholy and love, "you refuse my suit?" "Yes, Ella," he replied, in accents that were firm, tho' the speaker's voice trembled, "I admire you; I will be a brother to you, and watch with pride your course through life, and if ever trouble should befall you there will at least be one friend to whom yov can come for succor; but I can never, never be your husband." "It is not because I am poor, Henry? For oh, if that were all, I could toil gladly from morn till night for you, and strive and win a home for you, humble it might be, but our own." "It is useless to attempt to induce me to change my determination. Though I am but a poor weak man, I can never, never change my mind." "Then, cruel young man, so fair and yet so false, farewell. To-morrow you will see my mangled remains on the lecture platform, and know that it has been your work. But it will be too late," and, clasping him to her bosom in a wild embrace, she fled into the outer darkness.

MISCELLANY.

Joe's Heavy Catch.

The stream that Daniel Webster so well loved was famous for trout, and he was famous for catching them. Often he would sit for hours on a moss-covered stone in a retired nook—his line dangling in and above the water, but never a bite; and if there had been, the fish was safe, for he was entirely unconscious of all around and about him.—One warm and sultry morning in July, while thus absorbed, he was aroused by hearing over the stream:

"Hullo, there! hullo, I say! How are ye? Nice morning this! Got any fish? have any bites? How d'ye get over there? I've been fishing two hours; nary bite. I see you have long boots on; what'll you take to carry me over? Don't want to get my feet wet. I'll pay you well; what'll you take."

Here he paused long enough for Mr. Webster, who had all the time been surveying the speaker (a slight-built dandified youth), to ask:

"What will you give?"

"Well, a quarter; that's 'nough, ain't it?"

"Well, yes; I suppose it is."

So, quietly laying down his rod, he took his way to our Boston boy, Joe D., who, by the way, was as good a fellow as ever sold tape; he was now on a three days' furlough, and bound to crowd all the fishing, sea bathing and sight-seeing seasons into the allotted three days' time, and one was rapidly passing away. Mr. Webster seated himself on the bank; Joe mounted his shoulders, and, like Cæsar, whom Cassius from the raging Tiber bore, so Joe upon the god-like shoulders safely crossed the stream.—The quarter quickly changed hands.—Mr. Webster quietly settled into his accustomed seat, while Joe on further pleasure bent, hastened up the stream.—Tired and hungry, he returned rather late for dinner, and passed into the dining-hall, where the guests were engaged in the last act of the drama.

Our Bostonian, however, fell to with an appetite sharpened by his morning exercise, and with a full determination to make up with speed what he had lost in time. So intent upon his own affairs was he that he took no notice of those around the table, until some one requested Mr. Webster to relate his morning adventures.

Joe looked up, and following with his own the direction of all other eyes, he beheld his morning Æneas. Turning to his nearest neighbor he asked:

"Who is that?"

"That! why that's Daniel Webster."

He found no further use for his knife and fork, and was silently leaving the table, when Mr. Webster now recognized him; with a look or a nod (Joe could never tell which), he detained him and requested him to take wine.

Joe took the wine with a trembling hand, and with a look of earnest entreaty begged Mr. Webster not to relate the circumstance which occurred in the morning.

Mr. Webster replied:

"You should not be ashamed of the adventure, since there is no young man in the country, however lofty his aspirations, that will be likely to attain the position you this morning occupied."

Joe left the table and the house, and on the first train left town, satisfied that he had done enough for one season. In the evening Mr. Webster related the whole affair to the assembled guests, and this day, Joe enjoys the sobriquent of "Dan."

Strange Music in the Air.

The Rochester Express says that the people of North Chili, Monroe county, are speculating, and some of them getting superstious, over an unaccountable noise, which it thus describes: "It is not a vagary nor an illusion. The evidence of the existence and reourrence of the curious phenomenon is unimpeachable. It has been observed and commented upon by a large number of reliable people. About seven o'clock every morning there can be heard a soft, soughing sound in the air, like the music of an Æolian harp, but of greater volume. This weird music seems to pervade the air for miles. Families living widely apart have heard it the same hour. At first it was noted with simple curiosity, but its recurrence with such regularity when the air is not disturbed by violent storms has given it a romantic interest. Various theories have been presented, such as the vibration of the telegraph wires, or the sound of a far distant locomotive whistle toned down and mellowed by distance, or some peculiar condition of the atmosphere, or formation of the ground. But these do not satisfactorily account for it. It is unlike the sound of wires, and too akin to music to be caused by an engine. It is heard miles away from the wires—on each side of the railroad—where the sound of vibration would be carried away by the wind. It seems to float high in the air, now clear, now faint, and then swelling again to distinctness. Some people have averred that the sounds proceed from a certain spot of ground about a mile from the station at North Chili. They describe the earth vibrates, and that the sound seems to rise and float away skyward."

An Experiment in Wheat Culture.

I said to you last spring that our grange was on a trial to see how much wheat we could make on one acre, and the season was not favorable in our country for a good crop, and the most made was 20 1-4 bushels. This amount I made, but it was not well filled, being about only one-half crop; according to straw I never thought it worth notice, as I have made more many times, to pick the best without any particular trial. I am now preparing to make more corn on an acre than our friend that made 221 bushels and seven quarts to the acre. I tell my neighbors that I want to excel all—I am improving every year in farming—quit renting because they will not farm well. I have offered to rent my land if they would farm it as well as I do, and take one-fourth rent. I tell our people we have the finest country in the world. If we would do our part we would be blessed with an abundance. I raise wheat, oats, rye and corn, and a variety of grasses, horses, cattle, sheep and hogs. I will let you hear from me again.—[V. C. Lamore, in Southern Plantation.

A Lock of Hair.

Almost every one has had at least one lock of hair cut from the head of one dwelling in that silent land whence come no messages, no letters, no tokens of any kind to tell of love and remembrance. Every one knows that strange emotion, half joy, half woe, with which the tiny relic of so much that was once dear can thrill the soul. Only now and then do we dare to take it from its hiding place, hold it in the palm, press it to the cheek, and use it as a talisman to recall all that we must perforce forget in the world for the sake of strength to do its battle.

We do not know whose hair that which you treasure may be—whether the flossy curl from a baby's head, the dark lock from the brow that once made your pillow, a parent's gray tress, or a young lover's sunny curl. Nor does it matter, for all love in its essence, in that part of it that outlives death, is alike and equally pure; but we know that there is nothing like it to you anywhere. There are no words for the thoughts it brings.—They mock language. As you touch it, and gaze at it, you have nothing to say. You feel the thorns of your dead rose, that is all, and the wounds they make bleed.

There are old superstitions about locks of hair. It was not well for lovers to exchange them, it is said; and sorcerers always require a lock of hair before working spells for or against man or woman. In Sweden and Norway one who lets a little bird get a hair of his head for her nest, dies before the young birds fly, unless old gossips are mistaken. Even about the hair of the living lies some romance; but the hair of the dead is a poem that hearts comprehend. So a thief, who had stolen a lady's jewel casket, once sent back at some risk to himself, a little golden tress folded away amidst the diamonds—more precious than they—to the childless mother, with this brief note: 'Which I 'arn't the 'art to keep hit.'

But it is only when it is cut off that there is any romance about hair, unless it is beautiful. On ugly tresses no one has any mercy. Yet, coarse or thin, or red or faded though it be, some day the commonest thatch that ever covered skull will be so much, so very much, to one who has outlived the being on whose head it grew; such a strange, awesome thing to kiss and shed fond tears over, and put away carefully, among precious relics.

A Farm of Twenty-five Acres.

Mr. B. F. Farnham, of Bucksport, Mo., has a small farm of 25 acres, five in tillage and the rest in pasture. He cut the present season eight tons of good hay, and raised from eighty-nine rods of land, 2,500 lbs. of squash, 80 bushels Mangold Wurtzel beets, 40 bushels carrots, 40 bushels potatoes, 5 bushels beans, 60 bushels rutabago turnips, besides sweet corn, pole beans, green peas, etc., for summer family use.

The first ten rods was planted with squash, hills 8 feet apart, made broad and deep with the spade, and potatoes drilled between the hills from which he raised 2500 lbs. squash, and 15 bushels potatoes. Twenty rods in Wurtzel beets yielded 80 bushels; nine rods in carrots 40 bushels; sixteen rods in potatoes 25 bushels; twenty rods in turnips 60 bushels; fourteen rods in beans 5 bushels; seed planted, 6 quarts. No fertilizers were used except stable manure, and he believes we should make our own fertilizers in our own stables. He has used phosphates in years past by way of experimenting but believes good hard wood ashes as valuable as the phosphates we generally purchase.

After the ground is prepared for the seed, about all the work and weeding is done with Harrington's patent seed sower and hand cultivator, of which Mr. Farnham speaks in the highest terms.—After harvest, his land is thoroughly plowed and cultivated, and laid down to grass in November. Mr. Farnham keeps two cows, from which he has sold the present season, $50 worth of milk; two calves for $4, and made 240 lbs. butter beside what milk and cream has been used in his family of five, and they are "good livers." He believes cows do quite as well in the winter on good hay and roots as on oil cake, cotton seed meal or shorts, which no farmer can afford to buy:—we can raise roots much the cheapest. In feeding Mr. Farnham makes a change in roots each day, feeding turnips, wurtzel, and carrots alternately.

It must be remembered two calves were kept to the age of four weeks, and 1200 qts. of milk sold, besides what was used in the family, which would take the milk of one cow at least. He has made two cords of excellent manure from his pigs, which was applied to the land before laying it down to grass in November.—[Rural New Yorker.

Influence of Greenbacks.

He looked like a man who might have had fifteen cents last fall, but who had used the last of it weeks ago. When he sat down in the restaurant the waiters paid no heed to him, and and he rapped several times before a colored man slid that way.

"I want fried oysters," said the man, as he looked over the bill of fare.

"Dey is jist out, fried oysters is," replied the waiter.

"Bring me a chicken, then."

"Dere isn't a chicken in de place."

"Got any venison?" inquired the man.

"Not an inch, sah."

"Any ham and eggs?"

"No, sah."

"See here," said the man, getting vexed, "I want a square meal. I've got the ducats right here, and I can pay for my dinner and buy your old cookshop besides."

He lifted a big roll of greenbacks out of his pocket, shook it at the darkey and continued:—

"Have you a chicken?"

"Yes, sah, I guess so, sah; I have de biggest kind o' belief dat since we commenced to talk a chicken has blown right into de kettle an' been cooked. And now about dat venison and dose fried oysters—dey has also arrived."

Chock Fu edits a Chinese newspaper in San Francisco. Add two l's to Fu's name, and you'll have the kind of men that edit too many English newspapers in the same city and elsewhere.—[Norristown Herald.

The Pleasures of Far ing.

It is a pleasure to an intelligent man to be the owner of a good farm and to carry on the business of farming. If done properly, no other pursuit is so well adapted to afford health and happiness. To have sweet milk, and fresh butter and eggs, and vegetables and fruits from one's own garden and orchard, and poultry, mutton and bacon of one's own raising, to live upon—is very agreeable. To see the pigs, lambs, calves and colts increasing, the crops growing, the stock improving in value, the fruit trees bearing their scarlet and golden harvests, and everything prospering as it generally will under wise management—affords any good man pleasure.

But the farmer to enjoy farming, must manage his business well. He must plan wisely and execute promptly. He must be a sort of military man in this respect. He must lay the plan of his campaign, at this season of the year, and carry it out as thoroughly as possibly. To enjoy farming, one wants the best of everything—the best cattle, horses, sheep and swine, fruits and crops. He should be ambitious to have the best, and should strive for it constantly. His crops should be put in the best manner. He should have the neatest and best kept meadows and pastures, the finest orchards and gardens, and neat farm buildings, and everything should show an air of tidiness and order dictated by an intelligent mind.

It is not necessary to have expensive buildings. Any, however cheap, if put in the proper place, surrounded by neat fences, and the grounds adorned by shade and forest trees—will look well.

The passer-by will be pleased at the outlook. He will see there the evidences of a happy home. The house sits back a few rods from the road, on a little knoll, so the water drains easily from it. Shrubbery and shade trees are planted in the yard. To the right or the left of the house and a little back of it, the barns and stables are built with some system. The garden and orchard are convenient to the house, and every thing is arranged in order. The farmer has taken pleasure in forming his plans, and now takes pleasure in seeing how neatly everything looks. His wife and sons and daughters and neighbors see the influence of these admirable arrangements. It has cost no more, or but little more, than to put up everything in a slip-shod, hap-hazard manner. It would sell for two or three times as much. But homes should never be sold. They are sacred places. They should be made for one's children, and children's children. How dear are all the associations of our childhood days! Why break them? Why let strangers intrude and desecrate places that are the holiest on earth?

If farmers would exercise this care and foresight and taste, in making their farms and homes attractive, there would be a stronger love for country life. There is too much inclination among the young people for the city, and yearly our cities are increasing in population and influence at the expense of the country.

Could parents see what we are compelled to see almost daily as we go from our country home to our office in the city, they would spare no labor to endear farm life to their sons and daughers. Could they see the debauchery, open and notorious, incident to all cities, they would shudder. Could they see the young men, yes, and young women, too, that parade city streets, bearing every evidence of vice and intemperance and degradation, that a few weeks or months or years ago came fresh and pure from country homes, and then consider that such perhaps may be the fate of their kith or kin, if country life is not made more attractive—would they not say it is our highest duty to attach our children to farm life, to favor innocent amusements, to patronize good books and papers and libraries, to help elevate the tone of society, to carefully consider the tastes and wishes of young people, and to give them proper direction, so that the dangerous period of youth may be passed in safety, and the rocks which have shattered the barks of tens of thousands of generous youths, may be avoided in the voyage of life, which all must travel.—[Rural World.

Households a Hundred Years Ago.

In speaking of the comparative comforts and conveniences enjoyed by our ancestors in their homes of a thousand years ago, with their descendants of this generation, Dr. Nichols, in the Boston Journal of Commerce says: Our fathers were groping in almost utter darkness, so far as science was concerned, and but little progress has been made in invention and the arts; scarcely one of the modern contrivances for cooking and for warming and lighting dwellings was known. Not a pound of coal or a cubic foot of illuminating gas had been burned in the country. No iron stoves were used and no contrivances for economizing heat were employed until Dr. Franklin invented the iron frame fire place, which still bears his name. All the cooking and warming in town, and country were done by the aid of fire kindled upon the brick hearthstone in the brick oven. Pine knots or tallow candles furnish the light for the long winter evenings, and sanded floors supplied the place of rugs and carpets. The water used for household purposes was drawn from deep wells, by the creaking "sweep" and it is a curious circumstance that both the well and the building meeting the necessity of a water closet were often at long distances from the house. In a cold night to be called toward either of them was something dreadful to think of. No form of pump was used in this country, so far as we learn, until after the commencement of the present century. There were no friction matches those early days by the aid of which a fire could be speedily kindled; and if the fire "went out" on the hearth over night and the tinder was damp so the spark would not "catch," the alternative remained of wading through the snow a mile or so to borrow a brand of a neighbor. Only one room in any house was warmed, (unless some one of the family were ill), in all the rest the temperature was at zero during many nights in winter. The men and women of a hundred years ago undressed and retired to their bed at night in an atmosphere colder then that of our modern barns and woodsheds and they never complained.

The Best End of a Bargain.

A certain farmer, who in the course of a year purchased a hundred dollars worth of goods (and always paid for them), called at the store of a village merchant, his regular place of dealing, with two dozen brooms, which he offered for sale. The merchant (who by the way, is fond of a good) bargain) examined his stock, and said:

"Well, Cyrus, I will give you a shilling apiece for these brooms."

Cryus appeared astonished at the offer, and quickly replied:

"Oh, no, John, I can't begin to take that for 'em, no how; but I'll let you have 'em for twenty cents apiece, and not a cent less."

"Cyrus you are crazy," replied John. "Why, see here," showing him a fine lot of brooms, "is an article a great deal better than yours" (which was true), "that I am retailing at twelve and a half cents apiece," (which was not true by seven and a half cents.)

"I don't care for that," answered Cyrus; "your brooms are cheap enough, but you can't have mine for less than twenty cents no how!" and pretending to be about half angry, he shouldered his brooms and started for the door.

The merchant, getting a little nervous over the probable loss of a good customer, and fearing he might go to some other store and never return, said:

"See here, Cyrus, hold on a while, if I give you twenty cents for your brooms, I suppose you will not object to take the price of them in goods."

"No, I don't care if I do," replied Cyrus.

"Well, then," said the merchant, "as you are an old customer, I will allow you twenty cents apiece for this lot. Let me see—twenty times twenty-four make just four hundred and eighty—yes; four dollars and eighty cents. What kind of goods will you have, Cyrus?"

"Well, now, John, I reckon it don't make any difference to you what kind of goods I take, does it?"

"Oh, no, not at all—not at all;" said the merchant.

"Well, then, as it don't make no difference to you, I'll take the amount in them 'ere brooms of yourn, at twelve and a half cents apiece! Let me see—four dollars and eighty cents will get thirty-eight brooms, and five cents over. It don't make much difference, John, about the five cents, but as you are a right clever feller, I believe I will just take the change in terbacker."

When Cyrus went out of the door with his brooms and "terbacker," John was seized with a serious breaking out at the mouth, during which time he was distinctly heard to violate the third commandment several times, by the bystanders, who enjoyed the joke hugely.

A Terrible Isolation.

Nearly opposite Brockway's is Porter's Island, Lake Superior, says Swineford in his history of the iron mines, a bit of rock, upon which was built the "government house," the residence of that high and potent individual, the United States agent, who reigned over the copper land, counter-signing permits and dispensing favors of a consular nature to visitors to Copper Harbor.

In the summer of 1846 we saw a half-breed woman who had been Crusoeing on the island; she and her husband had been placed on the island in charge of property. Owing to the wreck of the brig Astor, in the fall of 1845, supplies failed to reach them. Long they waited for succor, but in vain. Winter came on, snow covered the ground, and ice gathered on the waters; then this lone pair were left to their fate on this savage, desolate island "out of humanity's reach." The shrieking winds as they swept through the fir trees, and the black billows of the stormy lake, spending their sullen fury upon the rocky coasts, were the only sounds that could greet the ear during the long, dark winter of that high northern latitude. For companionship they must depend upon each other.

But, before the winter was half spent, the husband sickened and died, and the poor woman was absolutely alone.—Wrapping the remains of her dead husband in a blanket she removed them from the hut and deposited them in the snow, where, frozen solid like a pillar of ice, they were preserved until the return of spring permitted of other burial.—The widow passed the long winter as best she could, subsisting upon the flesh of rabbits which she managed to snare; her bereavement, hardships and the terrors of isolation, wonderful as it may seem, did not affect her health or mind. She was taken off from the island in the spring, and was happy enough when she reached the mainland.

Not A Common Rascal.—At Newark, yesterday, while the car on which Sheriff Dickson, of Richland county, was bringing two convicts to the penitentiary was at the depot, a considerable crowd gathered at the window at which the convicts were seated. Some curiosity was manifested as to what crime the convicts were sentenced for. A bystander finally asked one of the prisoners. "Why, don't you know me?" said the scamp. "My name is Hickox; I am the bank president who stole three hundred thousand dollars from the First National bank at Mansfield. I'm a big thief; not one of your common rascals. This other gentleman was my cashier." The answer appeared to be satisfactory.—[Columbus Dispatch.

What is the Sun?—Professor Rudolph, in a lengthy paper on the sun, says: A molten or white hot mass, 856,000 miles in diameter, equalling in bulk 1,260,000 worlds like our own, having a surrounding ocean of gas on fire, 50,000 miles deep, tongues of flames, darting upward more than 50,000 miles, volcanic forces that hurl into the solar atmosphere luminous matter to the height of 160,000 miles; drawing to itself all the worlds belonging to our family of planets, and holding them all in their proper places; attracting with such superior force the millions of solid and stray masses that are wandering in the fathomless abyss that they rush helplessly toward him, and fall into his fiery embrace. And thus he continues his sublime and restless march through his mighty orbit, having a period of more than 18,000,000 of years.

Raising Rabits for Food.

The value of rabbits artificially bred in France as food is reported to be $80,000,000 annually. Besides this their skins, which are employed for a great variety of uses, either with or without the fur, represent a large sum, the value of the exportation to Italy alone reaching $5,000,000 in a single year.

The flesh of these rabbits is used principally by the poorer classes, whom it supplies with a cheap and nutritious diet, which if it could only be supplied from beef, mutton and pork they could not afford.

Lately the extensive breeding of rabbits has been introduced into Italy by M. Costamagna, of Turin. Since 1874 he has erected extensive nurseries for breeding these animals, which he has thrown open to inspection, his primary idea for profit being the fur, which previously he had been obliged to export from France.

Connected with the nursery of M. Costamagna is a factory for the preparation and making up of the skins, so that the animals, which, on the first floor, are seen in the full enjoyment of health and vigor, issue from the third in the shape of beaver hats, warm, comfortable cloaks, elegant little muffs, and other articles of wearing apparel. The consequence was that the people becoming accustomed to this food the supply was not equal to the demand, although over 75,000 of these animals have been furnished for food since May, 1874.

The consumption has also extended to other parts of Piedmont, and into Lombardy, Venice and the Komagna; and now thousands who formerly could only indulge in meat on holiday occasions can now daily afford this, which cost them but little.

France, Germany and Belgium have long made use of rabbits as a common article of food, and now it would seem that the breeding of rabbits for food might become general throughout Europe.

And He Did.

And old man with a soldier's overcoat on and carrying a big hickory staff in his hand entered an office on Griswold street yesterday to make some inquires about a person named Johnson. He left the door wide open as he entered, and was walking across the room, when the shivering occupant yelled out:

Shut the door!

Did you speak to me? inquired the old man, as he halted.

Yes, sir, I spoke to you!

What did you say?

I said shut the door!

Which door?

The one behind you, sir. This is not a saw-mill, sir!

Did I say that this was a saw-mill? inquired the man. Don't you suppose I know an office from a saw-mill?

Why don't you shut the door? screamed the man behind the desk.

Do you want the door shut?

Yes.

Then I will shut it. There, the door is shut. Now, let me ask if you know a man named Johnson?

Yes; a thousand of them!

Will you tell me where I can find any of them?

No I won't! If I knew a million Johnsons I wouldn't tell you where you could find a blamed one of the lot!

Very well, sir, said the old man as he turned to go, that's what I get by obliging you. Not one man in ten would have shut that door for you.

I don't want it shut, growled the office man.

Then, sir, I shall leave it open, sir, said the old man as he went out.

And he did. A coal scuttle went down-stairs after him, but it is seldom that you can hit a man after he has got ten feet the start.—[Detroit Free Press.

Advice vs. Cash.

The other morning, when a rawboned stranger was pacing up Broadway he was accosted by a chronic old beggar, who whined out:—

"I've been sick for twenty-two years!"

"Woosh! but that's tough!" replied the stranger, as he came to a halt. "What seems to be the leading complaint?"

"Fever-sore, sir."

"Fever-sore! Why, you've just struck my family. My late wife had a fever-sore for eleven straight years."

"And I want a little money to buy medicine," said the beggar.

"No use in doctoring," replied the stranger. "We doctored Sarah Ann and doctored and doctored, and we just threw money away. I spent over $3,000 trying to cure that fever-sore, and she died on me just at harvest time, when I was in the worst muss in the world."

"Only five cents, sir," urged the beggar.

"Five cents is nothing. It isn't the money I care for; it's holding out false hopes to you. I tell you that you can't be cured, and you'd better stop feeing the doctors. What you want is rest. Go out and buy you a nice country residence, stock it with nice things, buy you a span of spanking good horses, and take comfort while you can; for you are just as sure to turn up your toes on account of that leg as you are sure that you see me! Don't fool away any more money. I had one in the family, and I know what I'm talking about!"

Aboriginal Wooden Legs.

A discovery has lately been made on an island in the Mississippi which shows that the aborigines of America were not wholly unacquainted with mechanical surgery, but occasionally wore wooden legs when deprived of their natural limbs. In a subterranean cave hewn out of solid rock, many thousands of years ago, was found, among other remarkable articles, a skull as brown as a polished walnut, perfect in every respect, and of extraordinary size, also an almost complete skeleton with a wooden leg. The fastenings of the artificial limb consisted of petrified leather and bronze buckles. The original leg appears to have been removed half way between the hip and knee. This discovery is regarded as extremely interesting, as not only proving that wooden extremities were fashionable in early ages, but that a knowledge of bronze was among the learning of the aborigines.

He came home very late one night, and after fumbling with his latch key a good while, muttered to himself, as he at length opened the door, "I mushmaky noish, caush tholoman's ashleep." He divested himself of his garments with some trouble, and was congratulating himself on his success as he was getting into bed, when a calm, clear, cold voice sent a chill down his spinal column: "Why, my dear, you ain't going to sleep in your hat, are you?"